

served our nation so bravely on September 11th. To these heroes, I offer my continuing respect, admiration and support.

HONORING NANCY HABERLAND,
OLYMPIC ATHLETE

HON. BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 7, 2004

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate my constituent, Nancy Haberland, for her participation in the Games of the XXVIIIth Olympiad.

In her Olympic debut this August, Nancy Haberland was forward in the Yngling boat. Ms. Haberland, along with skipper Carol Cronin and middle Liz Filter made up Team Atkins. The yngling class was one of the most closely contested races at the U.S. Olympic trials. In a remarkable achievement, Team Atkins beat out a field that included a previous Yngling world champion, Betsy Alison, and past Olympians Jody Swanson and Cory Sertl. Ms. Haberland has also won numerous national titles in several classes.

Nancy Haberland grew up in Northbrook, Illinois and started sailing at the age of 13. In 1984, she graduated from Miami University in Ohio with a degree in dietetics and management, and she is a registered dietitian. She serves our country now as a sailing coach at the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis, and I am privileged to represent her in Congress.

It has been said that the trademarks of a champion are, "The will to prepare, the guts to risk, and the desire to be the best." Ms. Haberland certainly possesses all three, and I urge my colleagues to join me in congratulating her.

SALUTING AMBASSADOR YUVAL
ROTEM

HON. HOWARD L. BERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 7, 2004

Mr. BERMAN. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I ask my colleagues to join me in saluting Ambassador Yuval Rotem, who served as consul general of Israel in Los Angeles from September 1999 to August 2004. Ambassador Rotem recently wrote an article for the Los Angeles Daily News on his experiences in Southern California that I would like to share with you today.

L.A.'s STORY ABOUT LIVING SIDE BY SIDE
(By Yuval Rotem)

Critics say Los Angeles is only image. The city, they claim, presents an illusion to the world much like the movies Hollywood projects on its big screens. The myth goes that it's a city of facades, with the favored tools being the editor's airbrush or the plastic surgeon's scalpel. There are no friendships here, only contacts and connections.

After five years on "extended vacation" in Southern California, I have found these statements far more superficial than the city they decry. As a permanent resident of the tormented Middle East, my time here has left me in awe of the wide variety of reli-

gions, colors, languages and life philosophies that intermingle in Los Angeles. To be a minority is to be in the majority in L.A., and despite its fragmented sprawl, coexistence is real, with each community adding to the flavor of the city.

That is not to say, however, there aren't absurd aspects about life in Los Angeles. There is, for example, the infatuation with cars and the impossibly tangled web of freeways. When we "bump into" people, it is likely in the most literal sense—a fender bender on the 405.

It is little wonder, then, that I learned one of L.A.'s more important lessons with the help of my car. Traveling on the 10 alone opened my eyes to the multitude of faces, languages, cuisines and cultures that run into each other here.

Starting in Venice, the stereotypical images of L.A.—beach bums soaking in the sun and fitness fanatics pumping iron at Muscle Beach—abound. Moving east, the Jewish neighborhood of the Pico corridor became a second home for me. On my way downtown, I stopped in Koreatown, historic West Adams district and eventually in East L.A.—making friends in each community: each group diverse, each group proud, each group American.

I traveled this freeway and others often during my tenure here—visiting a variety of communities along the way. What I have learned here has given me a Thomas Guide of sorts to maneuver and navigate through our differences to arrive ultimately at our similarities.

Dorothy Parker once described Los Angeles as "72 suburbs in search of a city," but I sometimes wonder how badly they really want to find it. The communities I passed on my drive down the 10 didn't seem to be looking for it; they already appeared to be perfectly at home and at peace as Angelenos. On July 4, for instance, people from all over this city simply don't appear interested to gather en masse at some civic center, but prefer neighborhood parades, local fireworks displays, and backyard barbecues.

Despite this geographic disconnection, the people of Los Angeles are nonetheless remarkably united. They share the same debates about Kobe vs. Shaq, the same frustrations with the traffic, the same concerns about schools and public safety, the same appreciation for the amazing beauty and vibrant cultural life that L.A. has to offer.

Most importantly, the diverse population of this city shares a truly laudable spirit of respect and tolerance for "the other." There have been, of course, many tough times. However, friendships and relationships that transcend ethnicity and religion are the norm here. By and large, people relate to each other as individuals—not as groups, not as categories, not as stereotypes.

As one who comes from the Middle East, where ethnic divisions have paralyzed us, I am in awe of the positive cross-cultural interaction between the people of Los Angeles.

From the inside, it is easy to see the problems—social and economic inequality, tensions that sometimes bubble to the surface, the challenge of educating 750,000 children who collectively speak more than 80 languages. It would be easy to focus on the chaotic events that have marked my time here: the energy crisis, wildfires, earthquakes and the recall election. Yet to me, an outsider, Los Angeles is something of a miracle.

At the end of the day, you see millions of people from every background imaginable living side by side, working together and forging a future under the bright California sun. In today's world, where terrorism, prejudice and hatred widen the already-existing gaps between peoples, this is an inspiration.

As I return to my own homeland, I carry with me the hope and promise that Los Angeles offers to the future—a fitting going-away present from the city of dreams.

TRIBUTE TO PETER VANDERKAAAY

HON. JOE KNOLLENBERG

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 7, 2004

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate Peter Vanderkaay, a resident of Oakland Township, Michigan, on his Olympic gold medal he won at the XXVIII Olympic Games in Athens, Greece. He has made all of us from Oakland County and Michigan proud.

Peter won his gold medal on the men's 4 × 200 meter freestyle swimming relay team, swimming the third leg of the race. Peter and his teammates, Michael Phelps, Ryan Lochte, and Klete Keller, set a new American record on their way to beating Australia by 0.13 seconds. It is the first time an American Olympic team has won this race since 1996.

Peter was a standout in high school swimming for Rochester Adams High School where he earned four varsity letters. He is a Michigan State champion in the 200 yard freestyle and a two-time Michigan State champion in the 500 yard freestyle. He was also selected as the 2002 Oakland Press Scholar Athlete of the Year.

Peter will return to the University of Michigan this fall as a junior and will continue to swim for the school and Club Wolverine. His accomplishments are overwhelming and impressive, especially considering it has only taken him two years to reach these achievements. Peter is a seven-time NCAA All-American, was the 2004 Co-Big Ten Conference Swimmer of the Year, the 2003 Big Ten Conference Freshman of the Year, and a six-time Big Ten Champion.

Being a world-class swimmer takes dedication and resolve. It takes sacrifice and long hours of practice. It is not always immediately rewarding and there are many challenges before becoming a champion. I commend Peter on his determination.

I also realize raising a swimmer is not easy and that is why Peter's parents, Mark and Robin, deserve recognition for their hard work over the years. In fact, they have raised four swimmers; Peter's brothers Christian, Alex and Dane are accomplished swimmers in their own right.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate Peter Vanderkaay on his Olympic success and wish him all the best in his future endeavors, both in and out of the pool.

HONORING RHADI FERGUSON

HON. BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 7, 2004

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend Rhadi Ferguson, a Maryland resident who proudly represented the United States as a member of its Judo Team in the games of the XXVIIIth Olympiad.